

## Wilderness House Literary Review 10/2

*John Grey*

### TRAVELLING BY ANGEL

I don't like these angels -  
they're too dazzling white -  
their outfits hurt my eyes -  
couldn't God have sent a redhead  
or maybe a black woman,  
someone Latino.  
and maybe not so pure,  
a couple of bikini babes  
with nice tans, good-hearted  
but who've been around,  
and why no tattoos?  
angel skin's so brazenly untainted -  
okay, so I wasn't expecting  
little devils in ink  
but why not a butterfly  
or a heart or a rose -  
and what about some depth -  
they're like holograms  
or some old Christian ministry movie  
projected on the wall -  
and, now I see them up close,  
they're not female at all -  
two men -  
isn't that ironic -  
I spend a lifetime  
describing the fairer sex as angels  
and I get Mick and Gabe  
for all my troubles -  
so where's the other guy?  
Raph couldn't make it?  
look, couldn't you line up a stretch limo  
to take me there  
rather than all this

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seraphim and cherubim -  
put it on my tab -  
some beers and maybe an angel...  
my kind not yours...  
for company -  
yeah, that's it,  
put it all on my tab...  
oh I forgot...  
it's my tab that this is all about.

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### THE MAN ON THE LEDGE

Step lightly on the narrow ledge  
The mob below will not support you  
if you drop.  
They're merely cheerleaders.  
And their game could just as easily  
be your broken body  
as a quiet step back through that window.

If the world you left behind doesn't suit,  
then go higher if possible.  
The sky, the clouds, if you wish.  
Imagine a place so above this world,  
all the gravity points away from you -  
the stars or your own burning brightness.

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### FROM BELOW

So drunk, he floats above himself  
but yet, there he is in his own body.

A woman beside him  
pings numbers into her cell  
in what seems an attempt  
to make herself angrier and angrier.

This is before they become  
a brief part of each other's history.

A feeble attempt on his part to stand  
is met with a spilling of a bowl of nachos.  
some down the front of her dress.

A jolt of the positive negative -  
they notice each other for the very first time.

One loneliness as per usual,  
the other unexpected -  
he orders another drink,  
she does likewise -  
with pity for a placemat, two beers sparkle.

This is written from the point of view of something tiny -  
a peanut shell, a pinch of salt, a drop of ale on the bar.  
From below, the faces seem pleasantly resigned or maybe morbidly happy.

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They came in as separate entities  
but they will leave together.

They appear large  
but only because of the author's shrunken vantage point.

Nothing will come of it beyond this night.  
And yet that's still more than something minuscule can imagine.